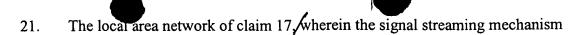What is claimed is:

1.   A method for controlling the streaming of voice data in a local area network,
the method comprising:

identifying at least one device to be used in a connection among a plurality
of devices coupled to the local area network;

identifying at least one mode for each of the at least one device to be used in
the connection; and

setting the at least one mode for the at least one device.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein identifying the mode for each device
comprises identifying at least one sink and at least one source for the connection.

3.   The method of claim 1, and further including locking the mode of the at least
one device during the connection.

4.   The method of claim 1, and further using a semaphore to prevent multiple
devices from simultaneously changing modes.

5.   The method of claim 1, wherein setting the at least one mode of the at least
one device comprises setting at least one mode of at least one of a server, a
telephone and a computer.

6.   The method of claim 1, wherein setting at least one mode of the at least one
device comprises setting at least one mode of one device to communicate as a
source for multiple devices on the local area network.

7.   The method of claim 1, and further including streaming data over the
connection based on the at least one mode of the at least one device.

8.   The method of claim 7, wherein streaming data comprises:

2   transmitting voice signals from a telephone to a computer; and

3   processing the voice signals with the computer.

1   9.   The method of claim 7, wherein streaming data comprises:

2   providing voice data from a telephone to a server for transmission over

3 another network; and

4   providing voice data to an application program running on a computer.

1   10.   The method of claim 7, wherein streaming data comprises providing voice

2 commands through a telephone to a computer to interact with an external network.

1   11.   A computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon to perform

2 the method comprising:

3   identifying at least one device to be used in a connection among a plurality

4 of devices coupled to a local area network; for

5   identifying at least one mode for each of the at least one device to be used in

6 the connection; and

7   setting the at least one mode for the at least one device.

1   12.   The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein identifying the at least

2 one mode for each device comprises identifying at least one sink and at least one

3 source for the connection.

1   13.   The computer readable medium of claim 11, and further including locking

2 the mode of the at least one device during the connection.

1   14.   The computer readable medium of claim 11, and further using a semaphore

2 to prevent multiple devices from simultaneously changing mode.

1   15.   The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein setting the at least one

2 mode of the at least one device comprises:

3   setting at least one mode of a server;

4   setting at least one mode of a telephone; and

5   setting at least one mode of a computer.

1   16.   The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein setting the at least one

2   mode of the at least one device comprises setting the mode of one device to

3   communicate as a source for multiple devices coupled to the local area network.

1   17.   A local area network, comprising:

2   a server/gateway coupled to at least one external network;

3   a plurality of devices that send and receive voice data, the plurality of

4   devices selectively and communicatively coupled together and to the

5   server/gateway; and

6   a signal streaming controller, associated with the server/gateway and the

7   plurality of devices, that selects a mode of operation for selected ones of the

8   server/gateway and the plurality of devices.

1   18.   The local area network of claim 17, wherein the plurality of devices

2   comprises:

3   at least one telephone coupled to the server/gateway; and

4   at least one computer coupled to the server/gateway and coupled to the

5   telephone.

1   19.   The local area network of claim 17, wherein the plurality of devices includes

2   at least one of an Ethernet and an Internet Protocol phone.

1   20.   The local area network of claim 17, wherein the signal streaming mechanism

2   includes a semaphore that prevents multiple devices from simultaneously changing

3   state.

1   21.   The local area network of claim 17, wherein the signal streaming mechanism

2   includes a locking mechanism that locks the mode of the at least one device during

3   the connection.

1   22.   The local area network of claim 18, wherein the at least one computer

2   includes an application program that responds to voice commands from at least one

3   of the at least one telephone and the at least one external network.

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